

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:172

ANSWERED ON:10.12.2008

POLLUTION IN RIVERS

Murmu Shri Hemlal; Prasad Shri Hari Kewal

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has issued any guidelines to States for controlling river pollution;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the level of pollution in various rivers flowing across the country has increased over the years;
- (d) if so, the details thereof, river-wise along with reasons therefore;
- (e) the details of fund earmarked and spent therefrom during each of the last three years and the current year towards cleaning of these rivers, river-wise; and
- (f) the effective steps taken by the Government to de-pollute these rivers and also to prevent pollutants coming into these rivers?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA)

(a) to (f) Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement referred in reply to parts (a) to (f) of the Lok Sabha Starred Question NO. 172 to be answered on Wednesday, the 10th December, 2008 on 'Pollution in Rivers' raised by Shri Hemlal Murmu and Shri Harikewal Prasad

(a) & (b) The launching of the Ganga Action Plan (GAP) Phase 1 as a centrally funded scheme in 1985 was the beginning of the river cleaning program with the objective of improving the water quality of the Ganga to acceptable standards by intercepting, diverting and treating the sewage. GAP Phase 1 was extended to GAP Phase II, which was approved in various stages during 1993-96. GAP Phase II was merged in late 1996 with the National River conservation Plan (NRCP), a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for pollution abatement in rivers. The major rivers are Ganga along with Yamuna, its major tributary, besides others. Pollution abatement works under NRCP are implemented on a cost sharing basis between Centre and States through Implementing Agencies nominated by the States and functioning under their control. Regular interactions are held with the States during review and monitoring of progress of work.

(b) & (d) Based on an independent monitoring undertaken by reputed institutions on some of the major rivers under NRCP, the water quality in terms of BOD (Bio-chemical Oxygen Demand) values is reported to have improved as compared to the water quality before taking up pollution abatement works.

For example, in respect of water quality of the river Ganga, the BOD values in the year 2008 range between 1.2 to 4.8 mg./litre in major monitoring locations as compared to BOD values ranging between 1.7 to 15.5 mg./litre in 1986.

The water quality of the river Yamuna is within the prescribed limits except in the stretch of Delhi and parts of Uttar Pradesh. The deviation in water quality in Delhi and Uttar Pradesh is mainly because of large scale abstraction of fresh water for drinking and other purposes.

(e) Central assistance is released from time to time in the form of recurring grants for the works taken up in the State. Details of the funds released to States and expenditure incurred by them during the last three financial years and the current financial year are given in the Annexure.

(g) The pollution abatement works undertaken under NRCP include interception and diversion works to capture the raw sewage flowing into the river through open drains and divert them for treatment in Sewage Treatment Plants; low cost sanitation works on river banks; electric and/or improved wood crematoria for proper cremation of bodies; river front development works, public participation and awareness programmes etc.

River conservation is a mammoth task requiring involvement of all the stakeholders. The Central Government supplements the efforts of the State Governments in creation of civic infrastructure for sewage management and disposal by providing grant for capital works in the identified polluted stretches. The Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) is another Central programme

presently in operation under the Union Ministry of Urban Development for supplementing the efforts of the State Governments and Urban Local Bodies by provision of Additional Central Assistance (ACA) for urban infrastructure as per guidelines of the programme. Sewerage and sewage treatment (i.e domestic waste water treatment) are along the admissible components under this programme. The Government has also initiated an exercise for revamping the river conservation strategy to promote a holistic and integrated approach.